

Appln. No.:

Amdt. dated:

Preliminary Amendment

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the first full paragraph on page 1 with the following paragraph:

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS --

-- This is a National Stage Application of PCT/US03/31652 under 35 USC §371(a), which claims priority of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/416,088 filed October 4, 2002, entitled "Surgical Stapling Device", now abandoned, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety. --